

SOME SUGGESTED RULES TO GOVERN ENTOMOLOGICAL PUBLICATIONS.

By T. D. A. COCKERELL.

Many years ago in England, I captured a rather uncommon hemipterous insect, and sent a record of it to a well-known entomological journal. The editor, being a lepidopterist, had never heard of the bug, but did know of a very rare moth having the specific name (*bicolor*) employed. He accordingly changed the generic name to that of the moth, and I found myself the astonished recorder of an insect I had never seen alive, nor hoped to see. More recently I communicated to a publication in this country a short paper on a supposed new plant of the genus *Ribes*. The editor, not liking the title, substituted "A New Currant from Arizona," whereas the plant was a gooseberry, and was from New Mexico. These rather amusing instances are cited merely to illustrate the indisputable fact that it is risky for an editor to interfere with the contributions he publishes. On the other hand, I have been shown manuscripts sent in for publication which, if printed exactly as received, would be simply unintelligible. The editor is in a difficult position, and as a rule, I think the contributors have little reason to feel otherwise than grateful for the treatment they receive; it is at least not rarely better than they deserve.

Although I am against editorial alterations in manuscripts, I think it may be entirely proper to adopt some simple rules to be enforced in every case, the papers which fail to conform being returned to their authors for correction. As entomological editors appear to have no such rules, with the exception of a few relating to typography, it occurs to me that the Entomological Society might properly discuss and adopt a set, pressing them upon the attention of editors with such authority as it may be considered to possess. As the result of a little private correspondence, I believe it would be easier to get all the editors together to agree upon certain things, than to persuade them individually to take the desired step. I cannot do more than present a suggestive outline, which may be discussed and amended as necessary.

(1) When a new genus is described, the type species must be stated; it may be as well to add, that the binomial made by combining the generic name with the specific name of the type species must be printed.

(2) No new genus will be published, that is not based on a described species.

(3) Rules 1 and 2 also apply to subgenera.

(4) No new species may be described without comparing it with some other described species, or stating wherein it differs from other members of the genus.

(5) When a new species is based on specimens from several localities, it must be explicitly stated which is the type locality.

(6) When a new species is described the data concerning localities and collectors must be given in full so far as known. This is also strongly recommended in the case of all new records. If the locality, collector, etc., are not known, it may be well to say so, although this may be taken for granted if the writer is known to be careful in citing data.

(7) It is impossible to avoid all errors in spelling, grammar, etc., but so many of them have appeared in recent years, that American entomologists have some reason to feel ashamed. It would be easy to compile a list of scientific names which must be retained in our lists, although faulty to the extent of being offensive. This is true in spite of the freest recognition of the fact that scientific latin is a living and growing language, and must include many words unknown to the ancients. No rule can cover this difficulty, but it might be worth while to collect every year a list of these criticisable productions, and set them forth as a warning to authors and editors alike.

(8) It is not permitted to publish new varieties as binomials; the trinomial must in every case be written out.